THE INQUIRER

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CONCERN FOR PERSONS

THE ASSEMBLY SERMON

(The Annual Meetings of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches were held in Birmingham from April 23 to April 26. The Assembly Sermon, printed in part below, was preached by the Rev. A. W. Vallance, minister of the Dunham Road Chapel, Altrincham, Cheshire.)

ONE Sunday last month, a tired mother who goes out to work at a part-time job, was going home on the bus with her children after taking afternoon Sunday School. It had been a difficult session. Among the thirty to forty children there had been a number of newly-joined 'teen-age boys, a rowdy lot, with only one rather too young male teacher to manage them. Sunday School always seemed a tough assignment, but this afternoon had been particularly wearing. "I wonder why I go on with it?" she murmured. Her young son was listening. "Well, why do you, mother?"

"If I didn't," she replied, "we are so short of teachers that very soon we should have no Sunday School at all."

The boy thought for a moment, and then asked, "Well, would it matter?" And his mother was left wondering.

Would it matter?

Would it matter, if one by one our group of churches and chapels and Sunday Schools and Women's Leagues and Young People's Leagues shut up shop, until we no longer had a General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches? You and I know the answer we have to give. Yes. To us it matters very much that there should be places of worship where complete freedom to worship God in spirit and in truth should be found; where unity rather than uniformity is desired, and where character is placed before creed. "Would it matter if we closed down?" we are asked. And our answer is: "Yes; we are needed".

Now what are we needed *for*? Our Assembly has ever so many concerns. This week's meetings will find us discussing organization, grants, ministers' stipends, advance campaigns, publicity, social service, youth work, overseas work, refugee work, peace work, temperance work; and for these things we have to proliferate committees and sub-committees, and amid all the trees of this forest, we may possibly lose sight of the wood itself. There is even a danger that we should think that organization justifies itself by existing; that if we provide the framework of a church or a league, we can sit down and expect people to come to it, and blame them if they don't—as if man were made for the church, and not the church for men and women.

The Church Exists For People

The Church exists for people, and our chief concern must be for people, not for committees and departments, and organs and boilers and notice-boards. All these accessories are most important. Every church should be well-kept, and should have a bright notice-board, and a decent organ, and be properly heated in winter. But more important still is what we are actually doing for people. We must never lose sight of this.

The great Liberal Christian writer, Adolf Harnack, defined the Christian Church as "the union of those who love, for the sake of those who suffer". What a grand description! The Church is to be love in action: care for those who need loving. But not only classes of people, Hungarian refugees, modern youth, "the under-privileged" whoever they may be: there must be care for all who have human needs, including the highly respectable and the definitely prosperous, but people who are somehow lost and perplexed in this mixed-up post-war world, the people for whom life has no very obvious meaning, the people whose lives are getting into a mess, or may get into a mess if we cannot show them a light to steer by.

When classes of people suffer, then the social reformers and the politicians must get down to it. But when people are mentally or spiritually in a mess, then you and I, the members of the church, must get down to it.

It is told of Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, the great American liberal Christian preacher, that one morning a well-known Boston minister who had travelled on the midnight train from Boston to New York in order to see him, rang him up for an appointment. Dr. Fosdick asked what it was about. "Well, in Boston we are going to have a great united public celebration, and we want you to be the orator. We offer a fee of 500 dollars". "I must decline with thanks," Fosdick replied. The visitor would not be put off. "If I can see you for just five minutes . . ." he persisted. "I'm sorry," said Dr. Fosdick, "I just can't spare five minutes," and he rang off.

Soon the telephone rang again. This time it was a negro minister who also happened to have travelled from Boston way. "Dr. Fosdick," he said, "I think I'm at the end of my rope. My troubles are so heavy that I don't want to go on living. Maybe you can show me why I should." Immediately Dr. Fosdick cancelled all his morning appointments and spent two hours with this unhappy man whose wife had cut her throat in her bedroom a few days before. The same afternoon that man went back on the train to take up his ministry again. His need had been more important than committees and deputations.

Of course it is not often so dramatic as that. It would be easy enough if people always came and told us they were in trouble. We have to get to know them well enough to find out. The story, however, is only another version of the parable of the Good Samaritan; the story of a busy man who made time to give personal help when it was needed, help incidentally, to one of another culture.

The Simplicity Of Our Faith

At this point I am reminded of the recent controversy in our denominational press as to whether our religious teaching is simple or otherwise. Some have said that a religion which faces life squarely cannot possibly be simple. Life is full of baffling problems, and we cannot expect a simple answer to them. We are bound to admit this; there is no very simple answer, for instance, to the problem of evil and the problem of suffering; but when that is said, there are two other considerations.

One is this. Some forms of religion seem to me to complicate the issues by starting with the idea of a God who is not first and foremost, as Jesus implied throughout his teaching, a God whose nature is love, with a wonderful capacity for forgiveness. In our own teaching we can avoid this kind of complication, though we cannot avoid facing the question why, in the world as we find it, so much suffering is apparent, and why so often the best people have to suffer most. We can find answers, though not too easily.

The second consideration is this. All deep religious faith must have its difficulties and its obscurities, but ultimately faith itself is a simple thing. This is not the same as saying that it is an easy thing. Religion in practice boils down to acting on faith, in many situations; and the hard thing is to find the faith in the first place. Dr. Fosdick had to spend two hours with the negro minister to help him to go back in faith to do his job as a minister. And most of that time was not spent in argument or in persuasion, but in prayer. When we are up against it, all we have to do is to put complete trust in God to see things through. How simple! But how terribly difficult! How impossible, if we just haven't got faith! How do we begin? How on earth are we to begin?

Well, we begin by associating with some one who has more faith than we have. The negro minister went to Dr. Fosdick. When people come to us in their perplexity, we shall then be able to give them not only our thought-out answers to many of life's problems. Some of our answers may help them, and some may not; but according to the measure of our faith, we shall be able to help them to find their own answers.

Life, for me, as for most people, presents some tremendous problems. Some of the intellectual questions go on remaining problems, but the simplicity of faith remains, the trust that God is good, and God is love. I believe in the Leadership of Jesus, because I catch from him some of the contagion of his trust in life. Many problems begin to resolve themselves if we see what action can be taken about them. It may not be easy action, but it will be simple.

Hurdling, for instance, is a very simple athletic pursuit. All you have to do is to jump the hurdles. "Simple enough," you say, "but not a bit easy". No, but the thing to do is to begin. Once you practise jumping a hurdle, just one, your muscles will begin to strengthen and adapt themselves. But there is no way to successful hurdling without effort.

And so the simplest form of religious faith that I know is my faith which I see exemplified in Jesus, that God is love. Love is a process of giving oneself. My faith is that God, the universal spirit, is continually giving his own spirit, sending it into the world of matter to express itself at last in living individual spirits. I see God revealed in holy human lives: God in Moses, God in Isaiah, God, supremely, in Jesus Christ. Nor will I stop there. I see God revealed in Gautama Buddha, God in Confucius, God in Muhammad, God in St. Francis of Assisi, God in George Fox, God in Mahatma Gandhi, God in Albert Schweitzer. What more of God can you have than the spirit of self-sacrificing love? St. Paul spoke of the "fulness of God bodily", but I am afraid that to me this is a form of words without significance; for as far as I understand spiritual things, the *fulness* of God is not to be revealed *bodily*, that is to say physically, at all, but only spiritually. The fullness of God's nature is shown in acts of completely self-sacrificing love.

The Conditions of a Successful Church

What are the practical implications of all this? This is what I want to make clear. Our denominational organization is important, our committees are important, our publicity is important, our church management is important, but far and away the most important of all is the faith we are sharing with ordinary people. If ever we put a committee before a sick-call, I think we shall be wrong. If ever we put the preparation of a sermon before the claim of some one in trouble, we shall be wrong. For as a church we must be at the service of all, the perplexed, the doubting, the ailing, the despondent, and not only these: we *must* steadily serve the healthy, the young and strong, the competent, showing them faith in action. The church that ultimately prospers will be the church that meets the deepest human needs—and the deepest human need is for faith. Faith goes hand in hand with hope and love. There is no defeatism where there is faith. Love will find a way where there is faith. Our faith is shown in our being at the service even of those who won't bother to come to church. In the end, people will come to a church where they find real faith and love.

We must be the church that gives itself; the church whose members give themselves without worrying about the cost. We must go out to the people who are waiting for a better church than they have so far found. I have recently heard of a congregation that won't take part in an Advance Campaign because they think they can't afford the outlay. Now that is the kind of church I should expect to run into a serious deficit before long. Jesus told of a man who saw a pearl of great price. He must have it, he said. It cost him—how much? Every penny he could scrape together. And then he was happy.

THE ASSEMBLY PREACHER

The Rev. A. W. Vallance

FREE FAITH AND NEW INSIGHTS

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

(Delivered by the Rev. J. P. Chalk, President of the General Assembly at the Annual Meeting, April 24.)

IN view of the diminished support given to so many churches in recent times the question has been asked: "Is there any future for organized religion?" But who can answer that question? All I can say is what I believe.

I believe that religion, by no means in its simplest form, but in its most vital form of wise, potent, sacrificial love, as active between whole peoples as between persons, is the all-inspiring power of God in Man, and still the supreme hope and glory of the world. Most of us have seen and adored the radiance of this religion in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth and other great spiritual revealers.

Further, I believe that within the lantern of the church, a protective and reflecting lantern, the flame of this divine love should burn with sustained intensity, sending forth its beams not only to scatter the darkness of men's fears, hate, and shame, but to light their path to higher destinies, and to guide their feet into the way of peace. I see no reason why this light should ever fail.

United Witness

I believe that in the diffusion of this light all religious people should unite. This, as I *have* always understood it, is one of the ideals of our Unitarian or Free Christian Faith. It certainly must be for those of us who believe in the spiritual unity of all mankind within the living and eternal unity of God.

It is surely on such grounds that we deplore exclusion or intolerance, specially when occasioned merely by tradition or by the demand on men to subscribe to uniformity in belief. One of the tragedies of our time has been the reactionary movement in Christendom that has re-introduced this unnecessary test between those who should be one in the service of the Kingdom. I would like to ask the leaders of the other denominations in this country one question. Why should not all the churches be able to witness with one voice to some of the moral or Christian aspects of those great social or international issues that matter most seriously here and now, in the common life of the people It was in this city of Birmingham that the greatest conference for this purpose in modern times took place over thirty years ago. It was attended by representatives of nearly all denominations, and as one who helped to organize that conference I wish its spirit could be revived. It was known as "Copec".

Being Realistic

Equally important, however, at this critical period in human history is the need for organized religion to make a far more effective contribution to men's faith. As we have been rightly and repeatedly told, what is at stake to-day is no longer this or that church-doctrine but the whole spiritual life of Man.

Here we must be realistic. Whatever other churches do, here we must face our own responsibilities. I believe we have a special obligation, first to our own people and then to those—and I believe they are an increasing number—who are seeking authentic aids to faith in the midst of a welter of religious claims and the reverse that are more bewildering and confused than ever.

And much as one may believe that the permanent in religion outshines the transient, one knows that tremendous changes are taking place in contemporary thought, and these involve—at least for thinking people—not only serious spiritual adjustments but possibly fresh claims to religious insights that have to be fearlessly considered. It is precisely in such a situation that our Movement has its special opportunity; for though our free religious witness goes back for centuries we are a pioneer Movement still.

And speaking of our free religious witness, may we not say with unabated confidence that it was never more justified than it is to-day? One need hardly mention its established and enviable capacity for embracing the relevant findings of every form of scientific inquiry without fear; there are other matters no less important.

What, for instance, but a free faith will allow its people to hold out the hand of friendship, as we so gladly do, to those of the great non-Christian faiths of the world with no intent or even desire to proselytize? And, considering the countless millions of non-Christians involved, the significance of this for the future of religion needs no emphasis. Or again, what but a free faith can enable its adherents consistently to plead for or sympathize with those who are so desperately seeking freedom in other lands?

Indeed, I cannot see how any church can demand liberty for others, specially liberty of mind, while it withholds this blessing from its own people.

Works and Worship

We remember, however, that religion has to do with the whole man. We shall not, therefore, imagine that intellectual enlightenment or freedom, either singly or together, can save society or the human soul. By our works men will judge the value and power of our faith; by our attitude towards them, the warmth or otherwise of our dealings with them, by the spirit we are of; above all, they will judge our faith by the greatness and the depth of that spiritual apprehension and experience which they can sense in our acts of worship, for this, I believe, is the ultimate—as it is the profoundest—satisfaction for which the vast majority of worshippers assuredly and rightly yearn.

Our Conditions and Prospects

I come then to the present condition and prospects of our churches as these appear to me. During my time our denomination, like so many other institutions, has changed almost beyond recognition. And certainly for most of the time the going has been hard indeed! For most congregations and ministers it still is. Their tenacity and fidelity under these conditions would surely win from any impartial observer sincere respect. Incidentally, allow me to say that this holds good for our extremely efficient but seriously overworked staff at headquarters. None the less I believe it is true to say that our outlook on the whole is better than it was ten years ago.

Our chief needs can be summarily stated. First, many more young people, specially those with zeal and education enough to serve usefully on committees and to help with the still younger end. If they have a few ideas with which to startle their elders so much the better! Our second need, of course, is for more ministers. Meanwhile, our Lay Preachers are carrying on a fine job of work and we could do with more of them. But our greatest need, I believe, is to develop our denomination into a voluntarily disciplined church. Our slogan everywhere to-day should be UNITARIANS UNITE!

Meanwhile, things *are* moving on here and there, which proves the possibility. We have actually a few new Causes! We have re-built some churches and are re-building more. Soon we shall see Essex Hall rising again, re-fashioned, in the heart of the Metropolis. For the second time in little more than a decade we have raised a very large sum of money. And lately the Advance Campaign has shown moderate revivals of church-life in several places.

Brighter Stars

Thus, twinkling through the clouds appear these brighter stars. Not yet a constellation, but enough to give us hope of some new and fairer dawn. My friends, as a I recall some of the great souls in our Movement whom it has been my privilege to know, men like James Drummond, Estlin Carpenter, Philip Wicksteed, S. H. Mellone, Enfield Dowson, W. G. Tarrant, and many equally fine laymen and women, I think with what thankfulness they would hear of even these modest advances considering the unparalleled trials through which we have had to struggle in these latter years, including two world wars, to keep the flag aloft that it might wave, as we trust it will, over happier generations.

So, finally, I would say to all in our churches here and overseas, particularly to those who have given so much to this beloved Cause—let us once more take heart of grace. True, the challenge is still formidable and our resources strained. None the less we shall go forward. We shall strive with due fidelity to be worthy of our forerunners. As their descendants we have still a most vital mission in this world, and with God's help we shall fulfil it.

FROM MY JOURNAL

By "Simplicitas"

NO one knew the tune of the last hymn this morning, and with no choir to help us it was a pity that the end of the service went somewhat astray. But what a bubble there was about it on the front steps afterwards! I couldn't help wishing the animated talk had been of the sermon the hymn was intended to enforce. I am sometimes tempted to wonder whether congregational singing isn't largely a reliving of bygone religious feelings recalled by well-loved tunes. I choose my hymns for their application to the theme of the day. Does anyone ever notice and sing them as I mean them to be sung?

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As I looked round the crematorium chapel this morning at the gathering of prosperous business men, I wondered when some of them had last attended public worship. As I waited for the recorded voluntary to finish I thought it a significant religious occasion. My words and prayers must offer to this congregation their rare glimpse of the Word of Life, even though we were in the presence of death. I hope my carefully compiled funeral service conveyed some confidence of the Spirit overriding the vicissitudes of mortal life. Undoubtedly, our dear W.J.S., to whom we offered our valediction this morning, would rejoice if the occasion contributed to a knowledge of the free faith for which he lived.

★

"Just the man we wanted to see", were the words that greeted me on Mrs. M's doorstep. I wish it were always so! "Me and his Dad were just telling Willy what a lucky lad he is to be able to go into the bakehouse when he leaves school. The business will be his some day, and it's a steady living and a good neighbourhood". "He thinks he wants to farm, nasty cold job, out in all weathers", explained our good baker. "Don't you think he'd be better here with me?" When the excitement had subsided and I was sitting in the best arm-chair with a cup of tea, I talked at length of square pegs I had known in round holes. I spoke of the mysterious working of the mind which makes one man like best to put the germ of wheat into the soil and another to form it into the bread of life. As the door closed behind me I heard the triumphant shout of Willy. "There you are Dad! What did he say! I can go on a farm can't I?" I sometimes feel a little guilty when I let down my adult side. I hope our good baker doesn't hold it against me, and sees that he and his son will both be fellow-workers with Life.

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I went to see J.R. to-day. It is his seventh week in hospital and he was very depressed. "Have you some good books and papers?" I asked brightly. "I wasn't never much of a one for reading", he said. "Do you get some good programmes on the radio?" I asked, glancing at the head-phones above his bed. "I don't listen much", was the reply. As I walked down the long hospital drive I wondered what I could offer him for entertainment, he whose life was normally filled with pottering around. Had it been his wife she would have had her knitting or her sewing to occupy her hospital hours. How important it is for men past middle age to prepare an absorbing interest for the time when accustomed routine can no longer keep them running on rails.

THE SMALL WOMAN

By Beryl Lee

"ONE hundred dollars reward will be paid by the Japanese army for information leading to the capture, alive, of any of the three people listed below". The third person was "The small woman known as Ai-weh-deh".

She was Gladys Aylward, who had been a parlourmaid in London until 1930, working at one time in the house of Sir Francis Younghusband. She had set her mind on going to China as a missionary, and had saved enough, but only just enough, for the journey to Tientsin, across Europe, Russia and Siberia. Although Russia and China were then at war, she made the journey, knowing not a word of Russian or Chinese. In Vladivostock she was "looked after" by a member of O.G.P.U. because the word "missionary" on her passport had puzzled Russian officials. They took it to mean "machinery", and as a machinist she would be useful to them. The story of how she was rescued from the agent is one of the most exciting incidents in this biographical account given of her by Alan Burgess.*

The author visited Miss Aylward when she returned to this country after twenty years in China. He knew nothing about her, except that she had been a missionary, but he thought her story might fit with a series which he was preparing for the B.B.C. of dramatized true stories. Gradually he got from her the amazing facts. She had not thought they were exciting; they were simply part of her job.

Arriving in China, she joined Mrs. Jeannie Lawson, widow of a missionary. She, too, seems to have been an extraordinary person, for she had gone alone, though well on in years, into the uplands of Shansi for the purpose of converting the natives, and it was there, after travelling part of the way on a mule-litter, that Gladys Aylward began her life as a missionary. Their method was simple. The Chinese love stories, so Mrs. Lawson told them stories from the Bible. Meanwhile, Gladys learnt the dialect well enough to speak, and recount the Bible stories herself. Gradually they got the notion of the "Christian God", and became so sure that the Christian God would protect Gladys that they pushed her into the local prison to quell a riot among the prisoners. These men were tough criminals, and at the moment when she appeared, one of them was brandishing a hatchet, intent on killing another prisoner. Astounded at seeing this woman, he paused—and when she asked him for the hatchet he gave it to her. No wonder she was called Ai-weh-deh (the Virtuous One).

She was also highly respected because of her friendship with the local Mandarin, an educated man, and at their last meeting, at a time of great crisis during the Japanese invasion, she was astonished to hear that he, also, was converted to Christianity.

The most astounding story of all, however, is of the manner in which she saved the lives of nearly a hundred children, some of them only five years of age. The terrors of war had left them helpless and without food. Starting off with two baskets of millet she shepherded them across wild mountainous country to the Yellow River. The journey took twelve days and when they arrived their troubles were by no means over. Only by chance did they get across to safety.

This is a heartening book of courage and faith. It is related by Alan Burgess with considerable restraint.

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* "*The Small Woman*", by *Alan Burgess*. (*Evans*).

IT OCCURRED TO ME

By Muriel Hilton

LAST autumn a friend gave us some hyacinth bulbs. The bowls in which I planted them would not take two easily so I placed one in the centre of each hoping they would not look too forlorn when in flower. By one of those strange and happy chances some of these bulbs produced double-stemmed hyacinths and now two perfect flowers blossom where only one was expected. They have unfolded fully, their perfume spilling heavily on the air. Nature is ever rich in the incalculable, profuse in her overflowing generosity, and when we behold such tokens of her bounty we feel that man, too, is denying his true nature when he is mean and calculating, cold and hard of heart.

There are some people whom we meet and especially certain young folk who overflow with loving generosity, and how our hearts warm to them. It is true they get into more emotional difficulties than those without such exuberance, but that is the penalty of the rich brimming nature. And do not those who taught religion as a way of life recognize that there must be beauty at the heart of religion itself? There is something vital beyond a measured morality, earnestness and cold sobriety. Going the second mile, forgiving seventy times seven are characteristic of the generous nature, and is there a more significant story in religion than that of the woman who broke the alabaster box for the sake of a beloved? In that simple, generous gesture, frowned at by the prudent and the self-consciously good, we have for all times a glimpse into the heart of life itself, life which is for ever outreaching, joyful and unconfined.

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A small item of news nearly went unnoticed in our daily paper. It was hidden away in a column containing snippets of news. Only two sentences, and yet they contain immeasurable value and importance. “A thousand young Germans in Hamburg are to make a pilgrimage to the former concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen. They will lay flowers at the mass grave where Anne Frank, the Jewish girl made famous by the stage play, is buried”.

Through one person the suffering of a people is symbolized and made known, and it is good to know that the gallant shining nobility of Anne Frank's spirit still lives on in her book and in the hearts of those who realize her greatness.

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A well-known pianist of our town helped to provide a musical evening at our church recently. After, as the artistes were enjoying some refreshments, the pianist said to me, “Well, this evening I feel I've at last paid a little of my debt to Unitarians”. And she went on to relate that as a girl in her 'teens working in a Sussex village, it was two members of our faith who had helped, encouraged and opened up avenues for her musical talent. She owed her musical career to them, and as she said in those days Unitarians in a country village were very much despised and rejected by the respectable. She hopes to give a concert herself at the church at a later date. It occurred to me that most of us are indebted to people and causes, and we take a great deal too much for granted.

What a delightful flourishing of goodwill and generosity would suddenly be made evident if we started paying off some of our debts. And if those countless number who, in some way, are indebted to the Unitarian faith would just attend the church of service, even if not with unfailing regularity, many of the problems which weigh on minister and lay-folk alike would swiftly disappear.

NEXT WEEK . . .

“The Inquirer” will be a twelve-page issue with reports of the Annual Meetings of the General Assembly.

YOU'LL BE ALIVE IN 1984

By A Student

NO one can have come into contact with George Orwell's portrayal of the future without being impressed. It may have been considered an exaggeration, it may have been considered an amusing flight of the imagination, but regardless of how we have viewed it we shall have been impressed with it. For it is a view of the future so different from what has been commonly expected We have looked forward to a Utopian future in which war, brutality and injustice have no place. In contrast to this optimistic view Orwell has given us a view of the future which is horrifying to contemplate.

Instead of the televison there is the telescreen, watching your every movement, taking careful note of the expression on your face, attempting to analyze even your thoughts. There are 19th century houses rotting away, their sides propped up with baulks of timber, their windows patched up with cardboard and their roofs with corrugated iron. There are the bombed sites on which have sprung up squalid colonies of wooden dwellings like chicken houses. There are the posters with the black-moustached face glazing down into your own, and the caption reminding you—if you require any reminder—that “Big Brother is Watching You”. The towering building of the Ministry of Truth with its three slogans plastered on each wall—War is Peace—Freedom is Slavery—Ignorance is Strength.

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“A world of fear, treachery and torment, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which grows not less but more merciless as it refines itself. Power is in inflicting pain and humiliation. Power is in tearing human minds to pieces, and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing. There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy. There will be no distinction between beauty and ugliness. There will be no curiosity, no enjoyment of the process of life. But always—always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—for ever”.

What caused Orwell to write such a book? What has been his motive in creating an account of the future which leaves not a shred of hope for the world's salvation? It is not a glimpse into the crystal ball, but the danger signal for our present civilization. What is the ultimate outcome to be of modern trends in politics, industry, entertainment and cheap literature? Is it to result in the Ministry of Defence which deals with War—the Ministry of Love which deals with Hate—the Ministry of Information which deals with Propaganda? Are we developing into an age in which man no longer possesses an individual personality but where all personalities are produced from the same mould? An age in which no one has a mind of their own: where no one thinks any more?

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What is life really going to be like for us in the future? Young people are concerned about the future for above all it is they who have to live in it. But we should never forget that we are responsible for the creation of our own future. We are our own architects and we can build the Divine Vision even among the “dark satanic mills” of the present time. Nor do we have to build devoid of hope, for there is always hope when we consider our human nature. True there is a base side to all of us but there is also the side which believes in goodness, truth and beauty—which not only believes in them, but is prepared to stand for them. A side which feels for those in distress, that offers the outstretched hand to those who find modern life hard and difficult. A side to us, which to me is the spirit of God within man.

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There is hope when young people come together to discuss the problems and meaning of life. There is always hope when young people will spend over an hour discussing the problem of prayer and the frustrations of youth as we have done in this Unitarian college for the past two weeks. There is hope, too, in the fact that this is 1957 and we have yet to create the society we shall be living in, in 1984. That is the responsibility of youth—that is the great adventure, that we are called to undertake. It is not merely the task of politicians, scientists, and educationalists to create a new world, it is the task for each one of us. We each have a part to play, so vital, that no one else can play it for us.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters should be addressed to the Editor, "The Inquirer," 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1. They should not in general exceed three to four hundred words in length.

An Instrumental Pragmatist

SIR,—In number 5979 of *The Inquirer* a sermon of mine was published for which I was humbly grateful. My attention has been called to a rejoinder by Rev. Lionel O. Reed in number 5981, who quotes: "I do not accept revelation . . . the so-called gods do not move me." Mr. Reed announces the curious proposition that theology is not important to a person unless that person believes in a god, presumably Mr. Reed's god. I know rather well several excellent theologians who are atheists. Most of the atheists I have known could disembowel most parish ministers in theological debate. For instance, I shudder to think what an atheist could do with the romanticism of Mr. Reed's last paragraph. I doubt if a person who is not interested in theology would bother to call himself an atheist. Theology is a massive science and it includes much besides the "God" concept. But if one teaches theology, he must deal with the terms of theology, which of course includes the God concept. The sermon to which Mr. Reed refers was on my private religion. Theology is theology irrespective of the private religion of the person studying or teaching it.

Incidentally, I am an impersonalist and therefore a theistic humanist, a dynamic monist, and an instrumental pragmatist, which I hope makes me philosophically respectable in the eyes of the British brethren, whom I suspect are more enamoured of labels than are we on this side of the water.—Yours,

Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A. *Harold Scott.*

NEWS REVIEW

Inter-Racial Youth Conference

What happens when you put Jamaicans, Africans, Indians and Europeans together at a dance? What happens when you put chemists and clerks and shop-assistants and doctors and engineers and theological students together in a discussion? What happens when you put Hindus and Moslems and Christians and Agnostics together in a religious service?

Thirty-odd young people found out last week at Great Hucklow, and what they found, they liked. It was the first inter-racial conference organized by Unitarian youth, specifically, the South Lancs. Region of U.Y.P.L. The conference was informal—there were no speakers, everybody piled right in from the word go, putting questions to a panel of their own members and arguing back if they disagreed. They discussed pretty well everything pertaining to race relations—landladies (what a problem that is!), jobs, mixed-marriages, colonial independence, religion, education, customs. A young mining engineer from West Africa complained that he was continually shocking his white friends by confessing that the first lion he had ever seen was in Belle Vue, Manchester! The conference was in stitches most of the time, which helped things along tremendously—most of the coloured folk were a little taken back at first by the new insights into European civilization and the English character provided by the Y.P.L.'s performance of such basic rituals as "Announcements", "[illegible]", "This little liberal light o' mine" and "She'll be coming round the mountain", but they soon got the hang of things, and joined in with gusto.

The upshot is a ten-point declaration on racial harmony with some practical proposals for things young people can do to further it. There is to be another residential conference of the same type later in the year, and a one-day reunion and dance in Manchester. Information from Keith Noble, 27 Gladstone Road, Altrincham, Ches.

Did the conference do any good? Well, as one Y.P.L.'er said at the end—"after the first hour or so you don't notice they were coloured any more"; or as the Nigerian commented—"so that's what Yorkshire pudding tastes like!" T.W.

Knutsford and Allostock Chapels: At the recently held Congregational Annual Meeting it was reported, among other encouraging facts, that following a rather heavy drain on the finances, due largely to repairs to the organ and the infestation of woodworm in the ancient chapel and the purchase of the Minister's house, a small working balance still remained as a result of the energies and generosity of members and friends. This old historic chapel needs constant attention and care in maintaining it in good condition.

Encouraging reports were also received concerning Allostock where, for the first time for many, many years, the Monthly Services have been continued throughout the winter in response to local requests, together with special and additional services. The Sunday School has also come very much alive in numbers and activity than hitherto. This small country Chapel appears to be gathering strength and meeting a felt need.

THE INQUIRER

YOUTH SUPPLEMENT

BY THE UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEAGUE

CARRYING ON THE TRADITION

By Ivan Knowlson

National President-Elect

(The following is a report of a Social Service Youth Leadership Course organized by the South-East Region of the League and held in London over the week-end, March 29 - 31, 1957.)

IN November, 1956, a group of London's young Unitarians met under the chairmanship of the Rev. Keith Treacher to examine the work of the U.Y.P.L. in London. It was decided that the function of the League was to provide opportunities for its members to examine and carry out the practical implications of their Faith, and to translate their belief in the Brotherhood of Man into action. Thus was born this Course.

There were a number of differences between this Youth Leadership Course and former ones. The whole Course was carried through by the League without the help of the R.E.Y.D. Experts were sought from outside the Movement. The Course was self-supporting as a result of a number of generous adult friends who subscribed the sum of over £30, and the magnificent effort of the ladies of the Highgate and Golders Green congregations, who ministered, as in the past, to our inner needs and thus ensured the success of the Course from that point of view.

Over twenty young people attended the Course, mostly from the London area, though there were some visitors from York and America. They met together in ideal weather to listen to seven lectures lasting over nine hours; to evaluate what they had heard, and to plan the "follow-up". In their spare time these young people—university students, teachers, clerks, typists, secretaries, school children—managed to fit in a social; discussions into the early hours; sing-songs assisted by the almost professional guitar-playing of a young American friend; two simple Epilogues, and finally a Youth Service. The Golders Green congregation was increased to over a hundred. Somehow they managed to find their beds, mattresses or rugs and snatch a few precious hours of sleep.

(Continued on page 144)

THE CALENDAR OF THE CHURCHES

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 1957

Aberdare, Highland Place, 11 and 6, Rev. D. Jacob Davies
Aberdeen, Unitarian Church, Skene Street, 11 and 6, Supply
Aberystwyth, New Street Meeting House, 11, Mr. D. Le [illegible] Morgan
Altrincham, Dunham Road Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. A. W. Vallance
Ainsworth, Unitarian Church, Knowsley Road, 11.15 and 3, Rev. B. Gill
Astley, Unitarian Chapel, Manchester Road, 3 and 6.30, Rev. Sydney H. Knight
Bath, Trim Street Chapel, Unitarian, 11, Rev. S. Spencer
Belfast, All Souls, Elmwood Avenue, 11.30 and 7, Dr. A. L. Agnew
Belfast, First Church, Rosemary Street, 11.30 and 7, Dr. H. J. McLachlan
Bessels Green (nr. Sevenoaks), Unitarian Church, 11, Rev. John Kielty
Billingshurst, Free Church, High Street, 11.15, Rev. J. Martin Hall
Birkenhead, Unitarian Church, [illegible] Road, 6.30, (May 5), Mr. F. A. Fitzpatrick
Birmingham, Church of Messiah, Broad Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Gordon Stuart
Birmingham, Waverley Road Church, and Hurst Street Mission, Small Heath, 6.30, Rev. [illegible] McGraw
Blackpool, North Shore, Dickson Road, 10.45 and 6.30, Mr. E. A. West
Blackpool, South Shore, Lytham Road, 11 and 6.30, Supply
Bolton, Bank Street, 2.30, Sunday School, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. W. Stephenson
Bolton, Unity Church, Deane Road, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. A. J. Long
Boston (Lincs), Unitarian Chapel, Spain Lane, 6.30, Rev. Henry Hall
Bournemouth, Unitarian Church, West Hill Road, 11, Rev. Lawrence Redfern
Bradford, Broadway Avenue, 3.15, Mr. T. Waring
Bradford, Town Hall Square, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Frank A. Bullock
Bridgwater, Christ Church, Dampiet Street, 3, Sunday School, 6.30, Rev. W. H. Correll
Bridport, Unitarian Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. G. Randall Jones
Brighton, Christ Church Unitarian, New Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. John Rowland
Bristol, Lewin's Mead Meeting, 6.30, Rev. A. H. Butler
Bristol, Oakfield Road, 11, Rev. A. H. Butler, 6.30, Mr. C. Wright
Burnley, Unitarian Church, Trafalgar Street, 2.30, Rev. L. Hallsworth
Bury, Bank Street, 11, Rev. F. M. Ryde, 6.30, Mrs. A. Jones
Cambridge, Memorial Church, Emmanuel Road, 11 and 6, Rev. H. Stewart Carter
Cardiff, The West Grove Unitarian Church, 11 and 6.30, Mr. Roy Jones
Chatham, The Church of the Good Companions, Hammond Hill, 3, Mr. Arthur Foote
Cheltenham, Bayshill Unitarian Church, Royal Well, 11, Study Service, 3, Sunday School, 6.30, Rev. Barbara Thomas
Chester, Matthew Henry's Chapel, Trinity Street, 11.15, No Sermon, 6.30, Rev. C. A. Piper
Chesterfield, Elder Yard Church, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Eric Shaw
Chowbent Chapel, Atherton, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Kenneth Twinn
Crewe, Free Christian Church, Beech Street, 6.30, Supply
Crewkerne, Unitarian Church, Hermitage Street, 11 and 6.30, Mrs. M. R. Dicken
Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley Road, 11, Rev. J. P. Chalk (also 6.30, 1st Sunday in the month)
Dean Row, 10.45, Rev. A. B. Downing; Styal, 6.30, Rev. A. B. Downing
Denton, Wilton Street Chapel, 11, Children's Chapel, 6.30, Rev. F. Cotter
Derby, Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, 6.30, Mrs. D. M. Marston
Ditchling, Old Meeting House, 10.45, Miss E. M. Butcher
Doncaster, Free Christian Church, Hall Gate, 11, Rev. G. W. Parkinson, 6.30 Mrs. C. H. Bartlett
Dover, Adrian Street, Unitarian Church, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Mr. C. Emery
Dublin, Stephen's Green, West, 11.30 and 7.30, Rev. E. Savell Hicks
Dudley, Old Meeting House, Wolverhampton Street, 11 and 6.30, Mr. B. Findlow
Dukinfield, Old Chapel, Chapel Hill, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Sydney P. Whitehouse
Dundee, Unitarian Church, 53 Constitution Road, 11, Rev. A. E. Peaston
Edinburgh, St. Mark's Church, Castle Terrace, 11, Rev. John Cavalier, 6.30 Rev. W. B. Tavener
Exeter, George's Chapel, South Street, 6.30, Rev. L. J. Hinde
Gee Cross, Hyde Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. Harry Smith
Glasgow, St. Vincent Street, Unitarian Church, 11, Rev. W. B. Tavener
Gloucester, Barton Street, 3, Rev. Barbara Thomas
Guildford, Ward Street Church, 11.15, Rev. R. Nigel Cross
Hale Chapel, Hale Barns, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. John Storer
Halifax, Northgate End, 10.45, Rev. J. B. Tosh, 6.30, Mr. Fred Bolt
Hastings, Free Christian Church, South Terrace, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Dennis Hilton
Hinckley, Great Meeting, Baines Lane, 11 and 6, Supply
Horsham, Worthing Road, 6.30, Rev. J. Martin Hall
Huddersfield, Fitzwilliam Street, 6.30, Rev. J. B. Tosh
Hull, Park Street Church (Unitarian), 6.30, Rev. Ernest Penn
Kendal, Market Place Chapel, 6.30, Supply
Kidderminster, New Meeting House, 11 and 6.30, Rev. [illegible] W. Hill
Knutsford, Brook Street Chapel, 11, Rev. Albert Smith, 6.30, Mrs. G. D. Foote
Lancaster, St. Nicholas Street Church, 6.30, Supply
Leeds, Mill Hill Chapel, City Square, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. R. L. Gilland
Leicester, Narborough Road, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Mr. C. V. Walton
Leicester, The Great Meeting, East Bond Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Leonard Mason
Letchworth, Secretary, Miss J. E. Lindsay, The Little House, Garth Road, 11, ——
Lewes, Westgate Chapel, 11, Rev. Dudley Richards
Lincoln, High Street, Unitarian Chapel, 6.30, Supply
Liverpool, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 and 6.30, Dr. P. N. Tindall
Liverpool, Bootle Free Church, 11, Rev. N. Kershaw
Liverpool, Domestic Mission, Mill Street, 6.30, Rev. J. Kerr [illegible]
Liverpool, Gateacre Chapel, 11, Rev. Stanley R. Butler
Liverpool, Hamilton Road, Everton, 3, Sunday School, 6.30, Supply
Liverpool, Hope Street, 6.30, Rev. E. Shirvell Price
Liverpool, Ullet Road, 11, Rev. E. Shirvell Price, 6.30, Rev. S. R. Butler
London, Bell Street, Edgware Road, 6, Rev. Walter M. Long
London, Blackfriars Mission and Stamford Street Chapel, 6.30, Rev. F. Hankinson
London, Brixton, Effra Road, 11, Rev. E. G. Lee
London, Essex Church, Palace Gardens Terrace, Notting Hill Gate, 11, Rev. J. C. Ballantyne (Also 6.30 2nd Sunday in the month)
London, Forest Gate, Upton Lane, 6.30, Mr. J. Nicholson
London, Golders Green, Hoop Lane, 11, Dr. [illegible] [illegible], 6.30, Rev. K. C. [illegible]
London, Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham Place, 6.30, Rev. Ralph E. Gilbertson (also, 11, 1st Sunday in the month)
London, Hampstead, Rosslyn Hill, 11, Rev. Donald P. Mair
London, Highgate Hill Unitarian Church, 11, Rev. K. C. [illegible]
London, Ilford High Road, 11 and 6.30, Mr. T. E. Dalton
London, Islington, Upper Street, [illegible] Hall, 6.30, Rev. A. V. Fox
London, Kilburn Unitarian Christian Church, Quex Road, 11, Rev. A. V. Fox
London, Lewisham Unitarian Church, High Street, 11, Rev. T. L. Jones
London, [illegible], Lea Bridge Road, Leyton Green, 6.30, Rev. W. [illegible]
London, Mansford Street Church, Bethnal Green, 6.30, Rev. Arthur Peacock
London, Richmond Free Church, Ormond Road, 11, Rev. W. H. Long
London, Stratford, West Ham Lane, Unitarian Church, 11.30, Children's Church, 6.30, Mr. [illegible] [illegible]
London, Wandsworth Unitarian Church, East Hill, 11, Rev. Arthur Peacock (also, 6.30, 1st Sunday in the month)
London, Welsh Unitarian Church at Highgate Hill Unitarian Church, 1st and 3rd Sundays, 6, Rev. T. L. Jones
London, Wood Green, Unity Church, Newham Road, 6.30, Rev. G. J. Grieve
Lytham St. Annes (Ansdell), Channing Road, 11, Rev. W. A. M. Hellary
Macclesfield, King Edward Street, 10.45, Rev. G. D. Foote, 6.30, Student
Maidstone, Unitarian Church, Market Buildings, 6.30, Mr. John Pickerton
Manchester, Blackley Unitarian Church, Chapel Lane, 6.30, Supply
Manchester, Cross Street Chapel, 10.45 Rev. B. L. Hopkin and 6.30, Rev. Albert Smith
Manchester, Gorton, Brookfield Church, Hyde Road, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Maurice Bonner
Manchester, Monton Church, Eccles, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. W. Hill Waring
Manchester, Pendleton Unitarian, Cross Lane, 6.30, Rev. T. W. Roberts
Manchester, Platt Chapel, Rusholme, 6.30, Rev. John Gill
Manchester, Rembrow Street Mission, 6.30, Rev. B. L. Hopkin
Manchester, Stand Chapel, Whitefield (May 5), 10.45, Rev. Sydney H. Knight, 6.30, Rev. F. M. Ryde
Manchester, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, 11, Mr. Philip M. Brown
Manchester, Wythenshawe, Unitarian Church, Brownley Road, Benchill, 6.30, Mr. F. Johnson
Mansfield, Old Meeting House, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Kenneth Sherratt
Marple, Unitarian Hall, 31 Stockport Road, 11 each Sunday
Mexborough, Free Christian Church, 6.30, Rev. E. A. Davies
Middleton, Old Road Chapel, 2.45 and 6, Rev. Fred Barr
Moretonhampstead, 3, and Newton Abbot, 6.30, Rev. C. G. Toone
Newcastle-on-Tyne, The Church of the Divine Unity, Ellison Place, 11 and 6.30, Rev. John Patton
Newchurch (Rossendale), Bethlehem Unitarian Church, 10.30 and 6, Rev. E. B. Short
Northampton, Kettering Road Church, 11, ——
Norwich, Octagon Chapel, Colegate, 11, Rev. J. A. Kenworthy
Nottingham, High Pavement Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. C. Gordon Bolam
Oldbury, Unitarian Church, Birmingham Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Harold A. Gore
Oldham, Lord Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. T. E. Nuttall
Oxford, Manchester College Chapel, 11.30, The Rev. The Principal
Padiham, Nazareth Unitarian Church, Knight Hill, 10.30 and 6, Rev. G. W. Petts
Park Lane Chapel, near Wigan, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Gordon Beverley
Plymouth, Unitarian Centre, Houndiscombe Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. H. Kensley
Poole, Unitarian Church, Hill Street, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Rev. J. W. Dunkle
Portsmouth, John Pounds Memorial Church, High Street, 11, Junior Church, 6.30, Mr. J. R. Stunden
Preston, Unitarian Chapel, Church Street, 6.30, Rev. W. A. M. Hellary
Ringwood, Hants, The Meeting House, 6.30, Rev. Lawrence Redfern
Rochdale, Blackwater Street, 10.30, Rev. F. W. Barr, 6, Mr. D. C. Doel
Rotherham, Church of our Father, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. N. J. Trapp
Sale, Atkinson Road, 11, Rev. John Gill
Scarborough, Unitarian Church, Westborough, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. W. T. Wilkins
Sheffield (Attercliffe), 6.30, Mr. T. H. Moore
Sheffield, Fulwood Old Chapel, 11, Rev. F. Sorell
Sheffield, Upper Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. G. Stanley Whyte
Sheffield, Unity Church, Crookesmoor Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. D. Davies
Shrewsbury, High Street, Unitarian, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Francis Terry
Sidmouth, Old Meeting, Unitarian, High Street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. Whittaker
Southampton, Church of The Saviour, London Road, 6.30, Mr. H. A. Guy
Southend-on-Sea, Darnley Road, 11, Children's Church, 6.30, Miss M. Griffiths
Southport, Portland Street Church, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. Maurice Johnson
Stockport, Unitarian Church, St. Peter's Gate, 10.30 and 6.30, Rev. J. R. Blackburn
St. Helens, Corporation Street, 6.30, Rev. Eric Wild
Stockton-on-Tees, Wellington Street, 6.30, Rev. A. D. Williams
Stourbridge, Presbyterian Unitarian Chapel, 11, Rev. C. Simpson, 6.30, Supply
Swansea, Unitarian Church, High Street, 6.30, Rev. B. Viney (also 11 First Sunday in the month)
Swansea, [illegible] Free Christian Meeting House, 11, Rev. B. Viney
Swindon, Swindon Hall Road, 10.45 and 6.30, Student
Taunton, Mary St. Chapel, 11, Rev. W. H. Correll, 2.30, Sunday School
Tenterden, Old Meeting House, Ashford Road, 6.30, Rev. G. Knight
Todmorden, Unitarian Church, 10.45 and 6, Rev. Alec L. Forrow
Torquay, Unity Church Montpellier Road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. Charles Eaton
Trowbridge, Conigre Unitarian Church, 6, Rev. S. Spencer
Warrington, Cairo Street, 10.30, Rev. Eric Wild, 6.30, Supply
Watford, Friends' House, Church Road (by permission), 7.30, (last Sunday in the month), Mr. Colin S. Dence
Wallasey, Memorial Church, Manor Road, 11, Mr. E. T. Williams, 6.30, Rev. N. Kershaw
West Bromwich, Lodge Road, 11, Children's Church, 6.15, Supply
West Kirby, Brookfield Gardens, 11, Rev. T. J. Jones (also 6.30, first Sunday in the month)
Whitby, Flowergate, 2.30, (Junior Church), Mrs. Eva Gill
York, St. Saviourgate Chapel, 6.30, Mr. G. E. Wainhert
The National Unitarian Fellowship provides for those unable to attend a Unitarian Church. For information write to the Secretary, N.U.F., 15 Gordon Sq., W.C.1.

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide, Unitarian Christian Church, Wakefield St., 11 and 7, Rev. Colin Gibson
Melbourne, Unitarian Church, Cathedral Place, C.2; Unitarian Half-Hour broadcast, 4.15. Services: 4 p.m., second Sunday in each month, Evening 7 p.m. Rev. V. James
Perth, Western Australia, Unitarian Free Christian Fellowship, Rev. R. H. Featherstone, 19 Clifton Crescent, Mt. Lawley
Sydney, New South Wales, Unitarian Church, 15 Francis Street (off College St. 7.15, Rev. D. W. Emerson, Manse Telephone LX 5121
Unitarian Fellowship of Australia, 1 Grice Alley, Melbourne, C.1. Minister: Rev. W. Bottomley. Meetings as advertised.
Seaford Community Church, Austin Road, Seaford (Vic.). S.S. weekly at 2.15 p.m. Public Worship, fortnightly 3.15 p.m. Minister: Rev. W. Bottomley

CANADA

Montreal, Church of the Messiah, Sherbrooke Street West and Simpson Street, 11, Rev. Angus Cameron
Toronto, First Unitarian Church, 175 St. Clair Avenue West, 11, Rev. W. P. Jenkins
Vancouver, B.C., Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 1,550 Tenth Avenue West, 11, Rev. A. P. Hewett

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland, Unitarian Church, Ponsonby Road, 11 and 7, Mr. M. J. Wilson
Wellington, Service suspended—Enquiries—Mrs. Warren, Tel. 40-232

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town, Hout Street, 11, Sunday School; 7, Service, Rev. Maurice C. Barrow

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POLISHED OAK HYMN BOARD

Births

Blake—On April 17, to John and Monica Blake, Hill Cove, Falkland Islands, a daughter—both well.

Rowlands—April 16, at Oxford Street, Maternity Hospital, Liverpool, to Marjorie (née Motley) and Roger, a son (both well). 6 Croft Edge, Oxton, Birkenhead.

Marriage

Davis—Blake—On April 17, by the Rev. A. H. Birtles, B.A., at Lewin's Mead Unitarian Chapel, Bristol, Christopher Brian Davis, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Davis, of Westbury-on-Trym, and Eleanor Muriel, elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Blake, of Winscombe.

Death

Larkin—Mrs. Emma, aged 91, passed peacefully away April 10. The funeral service was conducted on April 15 at Essex Church by Rev. W. Waddington. Mrs. Larkin was the oldest member of the congregation who since the beginning of the century served faithfully. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy mind and strength" and "Thy neighbour as thyself".

(Continued from page 142)

Mr. Trencher told us in his "Welcome" that the Course had two aims. To answer the questions: what was the scope of Social Service? What were the facilities available and the qualifications necessary to perform it efficiently? Secondly, to see if it was possible or desirable for London Unitarians to embark upon a Social Service project as a Movement.

We were honoured to have the encouragement and greetings of the General Assembly, brought by the Rev. John Kielty, who gave us a few words of his genial wisdom about our attitude to Social Service. He mentioned how we could get satisfaction out of a simple job well done without any show or fuss, after having discovered our limitations, and said that we could not begin too young. Then followed an inspiring talk by the Rev. Dudley Richards on the Unitarian tradition of Social Service. We learnt of past Unitarians who, in every field imaginable, had found opportunities of service—wealthy men like Thomas Termin and William Rathbone, humble persons like Katy Wilkinson and John Pounds, and the greatest of all Unitarian saints, Dorothea Dix. We all felt proud indeed of our fine tradition and prayed that we too might find the strength of faith to carry on in some small way.

There is not enough space to tell in detail of our other speakers. It would take all day to listen to their recorded lectures which we have for future reference. In a truly masterly fashion we were carried over the whole field of Social Service. We spent time learning of the training and work of Probation Officers, Marriage Guidance Councillors, Old People's Welfare Organizers, Family Welfare Units and the Citizens' Advice Bureau. We discussed case histories and found what a large proportion of social workers were voluntary, part-time helpers. We discovered just where we in our groups or as individuals could help. The most impressive thing about the speakers was their sense of humour and willingness and ability to make their vocations "live" for us, and their desire to answer all our questions as clearly as possible.

Perhaps the most valuable part of the Course was the Evaluation Session with representatives from the Women's League, the Union for Social Service and the London District Provincial Assembly. They helped us to discuss our "follow-up". Briefly, the points raised were: 1, In the Welfare State mental problems were best left to the experts, but we could help materially; 2, We could be of most use in the service of youth, of old people, or as friends of hospitals; 3, However small our service it would be of use, and experience would bring greater opportunities; 4, The League should explore the possibility of youth leadership training with the National Association of Boys and Mixed Clubs; 5, The Unitarian tradition was best carried out by individuals and small groups, inspired by wider ideals to find activity locally. This was best because large groups were unwieldy and brought lack of responsibility. Except for occasional projects, Branch or individual activity was more use than Regional participation; 6, The function of the Region in the League should be to co-operate with the Union for Social Service and other bodies to provide the stimulus for further Courses, give information and publicize them; 7, The desperate needs of our own Movement should not be forgotten—especially in respect of the Sunday Schools; 8, Branches participating should do something *right away* before the inspiration of the Course wore off.

*

Was the Course a success? From a short-term point of view, emphatically, it was—and I believe it was from a long-term view as well. Nothing could be a greater "thank you" than this to Mr. and Mrs. Steele, two socially-minded people, not Unitarians, who gave us the free run of their house and hired the local "Tea House" for our lectures and social, so providing the lovely setting of Hampstead Garden Suburb for our Course.

One thing we learnt: the job of our Movement is not to get people into heaven, but to help them enjoy heaven on earth!

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